

Letter *from*

FOR NEARLY SIXTY YEARS, the Fulbright Scholarship Program has demonstrated to the world that international educational exchanges offer limitless opportunities for fostering learning, encouraging greater understanding among peoples, and enhancing the leadership capability of participants. The visionary statesman who sponsored the legislation in 1946 that established this Program, the late Senator J. William Fulbright, would be immensely proud of the Program's impressive record of accomplishments. Through open, merit based competitions in America and abroad, selection processes that take into account the shared priorities of the United States and its foreign partners, and careful investment in leadership, the Fulbright Program has changed the world. Its participants have enriched virtually every field of endeavor. Consider that Fulbright alumni have been awarded 35 Nobel Prizes and more than 60 Pulitzer Prizes; 21 have received MacArthur Foundation "Genius" awards, and 14 have been recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Alumni include heads of state, cabinet ministers, ambassadors, Members of Congress, judges, heads of corporations, university presidents, journalists, artists, professors and teachers.



The final selection of these distinguished Fulbright grantees is the responsibility of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, consisting of twelve Presidentially appointed members who oversee the Program in the United

States and abroad. It has been a tremendously rewarding experience for me to serve as a member of the Board, to be elected its Vice Chair in December 2002, and then to be elected Chair in December 2003. My time on the Board has given me a unique opportunity to observe firsthand the very high quality of candidates who apply; indeed, every year there are more qualified applicants than there are resources to offer exchange opportunities to them. I have benefited enormously from the meetings I have had with Fulbrighters in the United States and abroad. My visits with foreign Fulbright alumni as well as with Americans on exchanges in several countries were truly enlightening and I gained invaluable insights about the Program through their reflections. In my experience, the seriousness of purpose, which is the hallmark of Fulbrighters with regard to their academic pursuits, is only surpassed by their unfailing curiosity and enthusiasm regarding the world around them. I find Fulbrighters pursuing the goal of

the Program to increase mutual understanding—and they do so in important ways. One of the most effective is through volunteerism and service, reaching beyond their immediate exchange settings and institutional hosts to make connections with colleagues and neighbors in their host communities. The stories of these Fulbrighters stimulated the Fulbright Board to explore, over the past year, the importance of more Fulbrighters becoming more engaged in their host communities during the period of their exchange. We will continue to encourage initiatives to facilitate greater interaction of this kind. Indeed, this report is one way in which we are highlighting the talent and engagement of Fulbrighters who carry on the legacy of service of the Fulbright Program.

The Fulbright Board considers another part of its mission to expand the Program's reach and promote greater awareness of the Program's importance. The Board invited distinguished alumni to its meetings in Washington, DC, met with Program officials and Executive Directors of binational Fulbright Commissions abroad, and reported to the President and to the Congress about the Program's potential for even greater success along with its resource needs. Indeed, the U.S. Congress is the Fulbright Program's primary source of support and makes annual appropriations for its administration. The Program administered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is binational in character and additional funding comes from foreign governments with whom the

Bureau cooperates in program planning and administration. Increasing foreign government contributions to the more than 150 binational programs is the top priority of the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Board supports the Department of State's emphasis to equally share the opportunity of Fulbright. The extent to which the Fulbright Program attracts support from private sources, in America and abroad, is additional testimony to its vibrancy and continued relevance in a world seeking to find ways to reduce conflict and improve understanding.

It is noteworthy that, after a 24-year hiatus, the Afghanistan Fulbright program was reestablished in 2003. The program in Iraq was reestablished shortly thereafter in October 2003. Such programs are the key to fostering mutual understanding at a particularly critical time.

In the report that follows, I invite the reader to consider the extraordinary contribution that Fulbrighters make. The vitality and dynamism of the Fulbright Program, now almost sixty years old, proves anew each day the value of international exchange and people-to-people diplomacy in fostering greater understanding among peoples.



STEVEN J. UHLFELDER, *Chair*

J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board

the Chair